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ABSTRACT

This is an institutional report summarizing 10 core external environmental trends and their implications for El Camino College and the surrounding community. The report offers a brief description for the following trends: (1) there is more emphasis on colleges becoming learning institutions rather than teaching institutions; (2) the current and future labor force will require mastery and application of basic skills, learning skills, and advanced technical skills; (3) enrollment increases in California community colleges are likely to continue; (4) employability will become a more realistic goal in the future rather than employment security; (5) the demand for distance learning programs will dramatically increase and will have profound effects on traditional higher education institutions; (6) welfare reform will continue to have important consequences for California, local counties, and community colleges; (7) population increases in Los Angeles County will continue; (8) Los Angeles County and South Bay occupational and sector growth will be the largest in motion pictures and entertainment, international trade, health care services, information technologies, and entrepreneurial areas; (9) more responsibility for lifelong learning will shift away from colleges and universities to non-traditional and different businesses and organizations; and (10) there is a growing inequality between the affluent, the poor, and the working poor. (Author/RC)

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10 Core External Environmental Trends

El Camino College

September 1998

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10 CORE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL TRENDS

SEPTEMBER, 1998

1. There is more emphasis on Colleges becoming learning institutions rather than teaching institutions.
2. The current and future labor force will require mastery and application of basic skills, learning skills, advanced technical skills, communication skills, and skills working with others.
3. Enrollment increases in California community Colleges are likely to continue in the future.
4. Employability will become a more realistic goal in the future rather than employment security.
5. The demand for distance learning programs will dramatically increase and will have profound effects on traditional higher education institutions.
6. Welfare reform will continue to have important consequences for California, local counties, and community Colleges.
7. Population increases in Los Angeles County will continue, especially among those ages 35-54 and those from Asian and Hispanic backgrounds.
8. Los Angeles County and South Bay occupational and sector growth will be the largest in motion pictures and entertainment, international trade, health care (including biomedical and biotechnology) services, information technologies, equipment manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, and entrepreneurial areas.
9. More responsibility for lifelong learning will shift away from Colleges and universities to non-traditional and different businesses and organizations.
10. There is growing inequality between the affluent and the poor and working-poor.

TREND 1: CHANGING EXPECTATIONS OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

There is more emphasis on Colleges becoming learning institutions rather than teaching institutions.

RATIONALE

There is support for the view that changes in the educational system---reviewing credit, place, efficiency, time, etc. may have spawned redesigning and re-engineering our system of higher education, but by doing so ignored the essential importance of placing learning first, before teaching. If the purpose of education is to improve and expand student learning, this requires flexibility for learners; it also requires student assessment and learning outcomes centering around what does a student know? And what can a student do? This shift views faculty as designers/managers/coaches, rather than the sole provider and authority of knowledge. Faculty are viewed as implementing new learning opportunities for students in a system marked by convenience for the learner more than convenience and requirements of faculty. An emphasis on placing learning first makes faculty responsible for learning outcomes. Thus providers of learning---which does not automatically include teachers or institutions--will prosper in the future.(O'Banion,4/19/97; Workplace, Winter, 1996).

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IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNITY

- Public support--political, financial, image, etc. may follow organizations that put learning first before organizational structures, processes and employees.
- If learning and convenience become central, Colleges and universities unable to change, will

find themselves being by-passed by learners.
- Certifying learning (in competencies, levels, or degrees of achievement) may provide a substantial challenge to continued public support of Colleges which express success according to standards of credits earned.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EL CAMINO

- Emphasis on the learner and learner outcomes puts greater stress on faculty
- Since learning occurs outside the classroom this places responsibility for learning on non-faculty — custodians, support staff, etc.
- Potential role changes for College employees will be met with resistance
- Student resistance may be strong because placing learning first means taking responsibility for their learning.

TREND 2: LABOR MARKET AND BASIC SKILLS

The current and future labor force will require mastery and application of basic skills, learning skills, advanced technical skills, communications skills, and skills working with others.

RATIONALE

The mismatch between low skill levels of job seekers and growing demand for highly trained employees has been thoroughly documented. The mismatch will be particularly acute in Southern California, due to its large number of poorly educated immigrants. (Silverstein, 4/26/97; Joyce and Votek, 5/96; DeBare, 4/27/97; Chancellor's Office, CCC, 8/96; CA. Labor Market Information Division, 12/95).

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY

- Workers trained in the areas identified by employers will have greater potential for employment.
- People will want training from institutions that provide specific competencies that make them employable
- Current workers will need skills up-grading to keep and advance in jobs
- Without responsive and well developed training programs the local economy could lose employment opportunities.
- More job and career changes
- Increased demand for bilingual employees
- Labor shortages, competition for skilled employees, and numbers of poorly skilled workers that are unemployed and/or unemployable will co-exist in the labor force

IMPLICATIONS FOR EL CAMINO

- Change curriculum to incorporate critical and basic skills (e.g. US Department of Labor identified skills and levels of performance) into academic and vocational education courses
- Change credit programs to follow lead of contract education--meet customer needs
- Emphasize the basics and integrate them into courses or assure that all students have basic competencies
- Investigate outcome-based evaluation, whereby students who demonstrate mastery of specific competencies receive certification to present to prospective employers
- More basic skills classes

- More instruction in the work ethic
- More career counseling
- Greater technology upgrades and training
- Increase ECC emphasis on helping students plan
- Help students with financial planning as an integral part of student counseling
- Resist the pressure to lower standards, reward teaching excellence more
- Counselors role to include advising students to combine language courses with other business skills
- Increase the number of programs such as ESL, vocational-technical and foreign trade
- Retraining programs for older and displaced workers
- Provide more hort-term intensive training programs for career changing adults
- Provide evening and weekend schedules for working women and minorities to upgrade skills
- Work more closely with employers to project changes in their own workforce

TREND 3: ENROLLMENT GROWTH

Enrollment increases in California community Colleges are likely to continue in the future.

RATIONALE

For the third successive year enrollments are up in state public Colleges, with a 4.3% state wide increase in community Colleges. Continuation of this increase is a function of the state of the economy and is subject to growing numbers of children of baby boomers entering higher education. Community Colleges, often enrolling first-generation College students and immigrants, are likely to see future increases. As one of a number of western, southern and southwestern growth states, California is expected to have 54% more high school graduates during the next decade.

South Bay high schools report lower drop out rates for the period 1992 through 1995. Most El Camino College feeder high schools posted declines in the percentage of students who continued their education in a California public College. (Slater, 11/4/97; Montgomery/La Russa, 4/23/97; Press-Telegram, 11/11/97).

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY

- Local businesses that serve students will see increases
- Increases in demand for housing may increase rental rates
- Increased competition for admission to four-year schools
- Insufficient funds for community Colleges to respond may trigger battles with competitors and politicians for allocation and distribution of public funds

IMPLICATIONS FOR EL CAMINO

- Decline in College attendance among South Bay high school graduates may mean fewer incoming students
- Fewer incoming students may require more efforts by the College in out-reach, marketing and enrollment development
- Increase connections with area high schools and academies
- If future enrollment increases occur it may mean greater demand for parking, registration, counseling, advising, faculty loads/distribution and composition, and off-site options.

TREND 4: EMPLOYABILITY V.S. EMPLOYMENT

Employability will become a more realistic goal in the future rather than employment security.

RATIONALE

As a result of massive economic and technological changes, the notion of lifetime and full-time employment is increasingly questioned, less common, and becoming more obsolete. Continued downsizing (in banking and finance, telecommunications, computers, defense industries, retail stores, etc.) and mergers and acquisitions, in an international market illustrate changes that suggest that while current and future work is plentiful, it can be accomplished without the same number and distribution of jobs. Support for a three-tiered labor force (a shrinking core of full-time/career jobs, a growing number of subcontractors , and a rising numbers of part-time and/or contingency workers, that are at best temporary in status) is indicative of this trend. The demands for highly-skilled workers will never reach the levels needed by the old economy and millions of College grads will have to accept substandard jobs for which they will be overqualified; the paradox is preparing people for a world-class work force with a decline in world-class job opportunities. Employability security recognizes that guaranteed or even life-time employment will be less likely in the future, and that community Colleges should provide those they serve with an education and training that will make them more or less employable more or less most of their work lives.(Handy, 1990; Boutwell, 10/97; Kegalas, 2/94; NY Business Wire, 4/23/97)

IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNITY

- Less income and spending
- More imbalance in the labor force contributes to greater inequality in society
- More questions and attacks on the economic value of higher education
- Less available tax money
- More resistance to public spending
- Economic frustration leads to more displacement and outlets for hostility in families, and against minorities, wealthy and privileged, and traditional economic and political institutions
- Need to expand job opportunities
- Need for counseling and related support services
- Highly educated people may need retraining in marketable job skills

IMPLICATIONS FOR EL CAMINO

- Fewer students pursuing four-year educational programs
- More students with significant student debt and more difficulty in paying off debt in the future
- Need to emphasize that education provides more than a job or place in business and industry
- Identify current and future distribution of three-tier components of the labor force and program for them as needed
- Employability more likely to be outcome for those who pursue lifelong learning

TREND 5: IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY

The demand for distance learning programs will dramatically increase and will have profound effects on traditional higher education institutions.

RATIONALE

Distance learning, the application of electronic means to education in all areas, has enlarged opportunities for more learning by more people. Students are attracted to distance learning for numerous reasons, especially the fact that they are time, pace, and place-free. Rapid advances in telecommunications have made possible the development of learning modules including video, e-mail, and the world wide web. Each of these are or can be components of the learning process or as the basis for instruction. Telecommunications applications have largely eliminated walls and boundaries. Current examples include the rapidly expanding University of Phoenix and establishment of a "virtual university" --the Western Governors University. Colleges which do not recognize and respond to the new educational technologies, will find themselves struggling to survive or prosper. (Robinson, 11/97; Bingham/Davis/Moore, 5/21/97; Oblinger, Winter, 1997; Brown and Duguid, 7-8/96; Hayes, 9/97; LaRouche, 1994; Tucker,; Star-Tribune, 1996; Educational Technology, 11/96;).

IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNITY

- Concern over unequal possession and use of telecommunications by students depending on the wealth of their families and communities (equity and access).
- Changes in social interaction and socialization brought on by increasing reliance on telecommunications
- Potential for more work and learning done at home and away from office, plant, school.
- Greater emphasis on learning how to learn
- Learners will take more responsibility for learning

IMPLICATIONS FOR EL CAMINO

- Research on impacts of telecommunications on student learning
- More planning, training, involvement to prepare for and adjust to future changes
- Continuous up-dating and training on use of telecommunications in the teaching-learning process
- Need to address concerns about telecommunications negatively impacting faculty and staff
- Anticipating and responding to a changed role for faculty (e.g. away from authority and repository of knowledge, to faculty as coaches and supporters.)
- Policy issues centering around future direction of resources---building "buildings" or building "telecommunications capacity and networks" or both
- Planning for and responding to needs for new and/or replacement telecommunications technology that is expensive
- Developing adequate standards for student achievement and professional workload measures
- Year-round, 24x7 learning
- Distance learning may be over-emphasized; students learn by personally interacting with teachers and students, especially beyond mastery of information and skills as levels
- Notions of tuition based on residence, credit-hour, daily attendance, etc. will need to be reviewed in light of their meaning and application in distance learning

TREND 6: IMPACT OF WELFARE REFORM

Welfare reform will continue to have important consequences for California, local counties, and community Colleges.

RATIONALE

In 1996 new welfare legislation gave states broad new powers to devise their own public assistance programs. The major aspect of the new legislation in California include requiring current recipients to find work within two years, and new recipients are restricted to 18 months on aid. Counties have the option of extending the deadlines for six months. Recipients can spend no more than five years of their lives on aid. Students can remain in school while on public aid only if they are making satisfactory progress in undergraduate or certificate programs leading to self-supporting employment. In California, more than 140,000 community College students (10%) of the population received public aid in the 1995-96 school year. Disagreements and conflicts are occurring as College representatives prefer a broad definition of goals associated with obtaining self-supporting employment, and welfare officials are emphasizing moving recipients quickly into work. (Rivera, 11/3/97; Willis, 5/13/97; Long Beach Press Telegram, 5/5/97; Community College League of California, 4/97; Harrison, 1/97; The Economist, 3/4/).

IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNITY

- Welfare reform could create a flood of new people seeking education and training
- Increased need for child care, transportation, counseling, basic skills and ESL instruction
- Increased opportunities to partner Colleges, government, and employers
- Welfare reform will increase the supply of cheap labor, which may limit company investment in labor-saving technology.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EL CAMINO

- Increase in enrollment
- More personnel and space in College day-care center
- Develop customized training programs for welfare recipients at El Camino
- Increased need for basic skills instruction, counseling and advising, and job development and placement
- Greater emphasis on convenient time and place to provide welfare students programs and services
- Access federal and state aid funds to provide programs and services for welfare students

TREND 7: COUNTY AND LOCAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Population increases in Los Angeles County will continue especially among those 35-54 and those from Asian and Hispanic backgrounds.

RATIONALE

Since the 1990 census Los Angeles County continues to evidence a growing population, with an increase of approximately 1.1 million new residents from the period 1990 through 2000. Increases are expected through at least 2010. Population cohorts expected to increase include those 35-54, women, and single-parent families. Newly arriving immigrants, and those from Hispanic and Asian populations will evidence a significant population increase in the future.

Similar increases are expected for South Bay cities, with an increase of approximately 58,000 residents for the period from 1990-2000, and another 60,000 residents through 2010. Within the College's service area, increases in those 35-54, and among Hispanic and Asian populations are likely.(Southern California Association of Governments, 5/95; US Census Bureau, Los Angeles County, 1994 and 1996).

IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNITY

- Any notion of an "average" county and community resident is increasingly suspect
- There is a greater possibility of cultural differences and conflicts, especially in areas such as language, politics and power, employment, etc.
- To the extent that Hispanic and Asian populations are younger and may be disproportionately poor, the County will find its resources limited and under siege.
- Greater chances for "balkanization"
- Greater need for common community building

IMPLICATIONS FOR EL CAMINO

- Faculty, staff, and administrators will need to examine if and how learning can become more successful with immigrants and those from Asian and Hispanic backgrounds
- The College will need to plan for rising numbers of students
- The College will enroll rising numbers of disabled students
- The College will need to strengthen its counseling, assessment and placement programs
- The College can expect increases in students requiring remedial and developmental work
- Current and future students will require and expect convenience and quality in their programs and services.

TREND 8: OCCUPATIONAL GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Los Angeles County and South Bay occupational and sector growth will be the largest in motion pictures and entertainment, international trade, health care (including biomedical and biotechnology) services, information technologies, equipment manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, and entrepreneurial areas.

RATIONALE

The US Bureau of Labor projections for 1996-2006 indicate 15 out of the 20 fastest growing occupations are associated with health services or computer technology, and self-employment opportunities will be the greatest in occupations requiring creativity, artistic ability, or design skills. These predictions are especially applicable to Southern California/Los Angeles with its concentration of entertainment and information technologies. Future labor force growth is reflected in the most recent Los Angeles Times poll (2/3/98) which reported that residents of Southern California feel good about the direction in which the state is heading, the robustness of the state's economy and the future economy. The poll found 57% of Southern Californians feeling this way, the most optimism since December, 1991. (BLS, Occupational Outlook Quarterly, 1997-98; Gibson, 1/97; Bradshaw speech, 5/22/97; CA. Employment Development Department, 4/7/97; Demographic Data for LA County, 5/19/97; LA Times, 5/6/97; Torres, 3/8/97; CA. Economic Indicators, 1-2/97; Dickerson, 10/21/97; Losyk, 3-4/97; Skratt, 10/28/97; Daily Breeze, 11/5/97; Lister, 4/28/97).

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY

- Community centers providing child and related care for those involved in home-based businesses may increase
- More people interested in learning computer skills
- More employment for South Bay residents
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More people moving into South Bay
- More business for South Bay suppliers
- The labor force will need lifelong learning
- More activities and transactions in financial and commercial ventures
- Every new job created in LA County brings $5000 in revenue to the county and municipality
- High demand for good quality office space in LA County
- Growth potential of sectors and occupations in LA County will be linked to land use, transportation issues, and the location of a skilled labor force.
- New start-up companies may invest in the community and education
- LA is more than ever an opportunity for entrepreneurs which will encourage business and job growth
- Entrepreneurial efforts and small start-up companies give people a sense of personal empowerment

IMPLICATIONS FOR EL CAMINO

- Increased pressure from staff to telecommute
- Increased demand for classes on running one's own business and small business
- Potential increase in number of students taking classes, especially business related, via distance education and through a weekend College
- Encourage students to have more than one major or area of expertise for more career flexibility
- Improve and expand College's computer related programs and services
- Establish teacher training programs for people interested in the field
- Cultivate relationships with commercial employers to provide staff assessment needs
- College could become more pro-active in economic and educational partnerships in its community
- Internationalize College's curriculum
- Increase College involvement in environmental issues related to changing land use
- Increase College effort to monitor trends for planning for the future
- Continually assess curriculum to meet the demands of high-tech employment requirements
- Increase funding for necessary instructional technology
- Create additional vocational degrees/certificates in entrepreneurship
- ECC could capitalize on international trade as Port of Long Beach is nearby
- The College theater program will be impacted by entertainment and entrepreneurs

TREND 9: MORE AND DIFFERENT PROVIDERS OF LEARNING

More responsibility for lifelong learning will shift away from Colleges and universities to non-traditional and different businesses and organizations.

RATIONALE

In the past few years observers and authors (e.g. Davis and Botkin, *The Monster Under the Bed)* have noted that as lifelong learning---and the marketplace for it--has expanded more and more of this expansion is being better met by businesses than Colleges and universities.

Businesses and organizations have invested large amounts of money in educational systems---software companies (Micrsosoft, Novell) which certify their trainers and network personnel, and Motorola University, are examples. This trend is more and more pronounced in regard to public (K-12) education with the emergence and growth of private and parochial schools, charter schools, vouchers, contract services, and home schooling. The responsibility for future education to enable a

country to be competitive will rest with business not Colleges and universities. This shift finds support among those who believe that traditional higher education institutions show little evidence or signs of adapting to changes. Unless Colleges and universities adjust the ways (e.g. they are organized--with reliance on seat, clock, and schedule time), assess students and issue meaningful credentials, they will be displaced by nimble private competitors. (Graff; Froeschle/Anderberg; Hatch/Lewis/Thomas).

IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNITY

- Corporations will have profound effects on Colleges/universities, on what education is provided, and how
- Competition by other providers is the "monster"and strategies to respond are needed
- Growing choices means that public education may find dwindling commitment, support and control
- May be greater reduction in resources for public education at all levels
- May be less job security for public school and higher education employees

IMPLICATIONS FOR EL CAMINO

- Need for a reasonable balance between career-centered and broad based general education
- Will need to address the challenges of tenure, academic structures, processes, clock hours, seat times, etc.
- Educate the public to recognize that the College provides value and is worthy of continuing funding
- If parents and their children become dissatisfied with public higher education, and can afford private education, they will withdraw their support for public education.

TREND 10: INEQUALITY

There is growing inequality between the affluent and the poor and working-poor.

RATIONALE

Sources including the Congressional Budget Office, social scientists, economists, and research organizations have documented growing inequality in the US in a host of indicators including quality and quantity of education, access to and use of technology, health care, life expectancy, poverty figures, violence, unemployment rates, etc. The poverty rate is increasing in LA County. Inequality and wage stagnation are not diminishing. (LA TIMES, 11/15/97; NY Times, 3/30/97; LA Times, 11/9/97).

IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNITY

- Increases in gang and gun violence
- Increases in child mortality and domestic violence
- Increases in substance abuse
- Increases in poorly prepared students
- Increased demand for health and social services
- More concern for personal and community security
- More hopelessness among the disadvantaged

IMPLICATIONS FOR EL CAMINO

- More demand for counseling and advising services
- More concern for campus safety
- Greater intervention by counseling, health and child care departments
- More challenges to faculty in their field and teaching style
- Higher stress levels among students and faculty

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